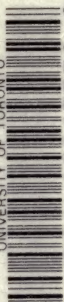


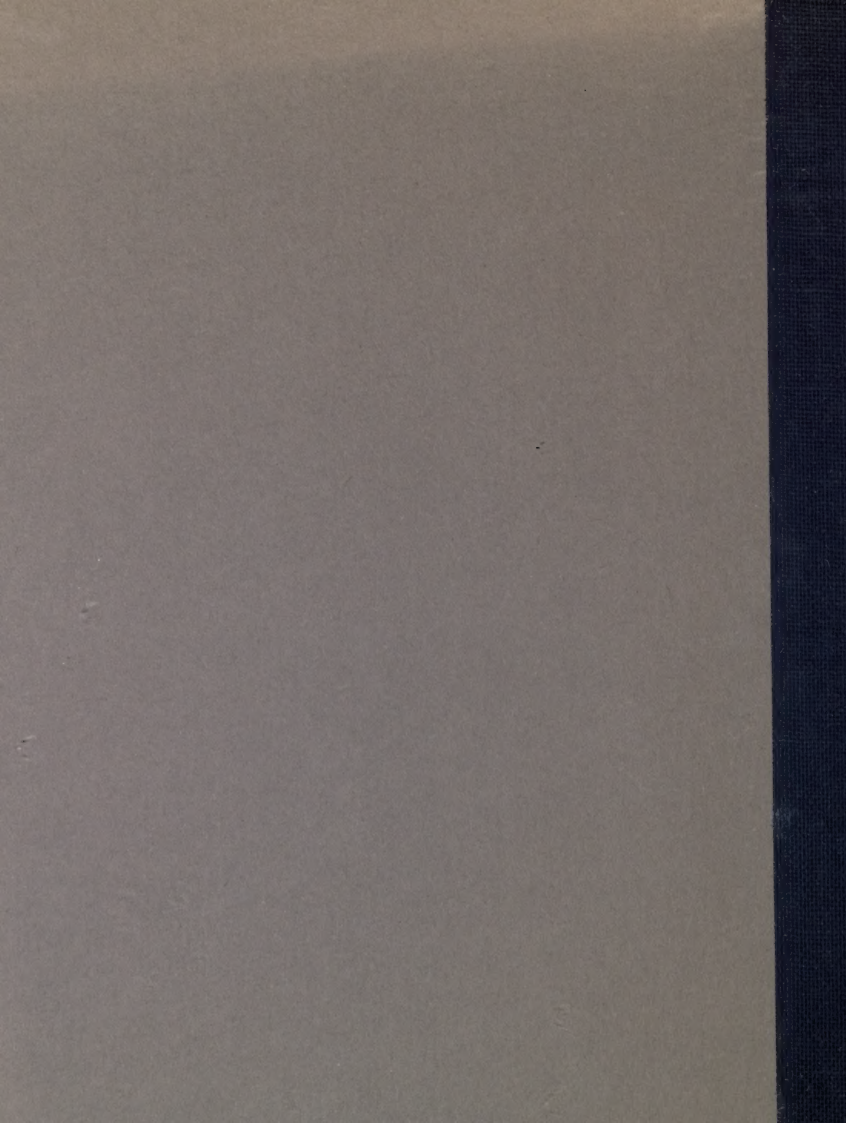
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THE EGYPTIAN PILLAR

By Eva Gore-Booth ::

Being Number Three of the

Tower Press Booklets---Second

Series :: :: ::



MAUNSEL & CO., Ltd.,

96 Middle Abbey Street,

Dublin :: :: ::

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MAUNSEL & CO., Ltd.,
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Dublin . . . 1907



The soul has its Revelations, the heart its Mysteries.

—THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.



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To my Sister,
CONSTANCE DE MARKIEVICZ,
in remembrance of November 10th, 1906,
and of some dreams we hold
in common.

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*One thought has been my whole life through the
soul of every dream,
It shines from the blue sky, it rustles in sheaves
of corn,
It laughs in the waves of the sea, it shakes in the
flowing stream
To think one thought I was born.*

*I know that I saw the world from a far and
holy place,
And dreamed e'er my life began of the deed I
would do
When I had moulded the clay to the likeness of a
face,
With eyes that the tears ran through.*

*Therefore it is that I have no choice in the world
to-day,
Therefore I have no will, I am but a Blind
Man led
By the secret hand and the unknown power that
carved my heart out of clay,
And numbers the tears that I shed.*

ROSES

WHEN her twigs are bare
In the grim air,
And her leaves are shed,
Is the Rose dead?

Does she dream, does she sleep,
In her roots buried deep?
Does she lie at rest
With the earth on her breast?

Ah no, the Rose goes—
The spirit of the Rose
Blooms, and is fair
Elsewhere.

Behold, there is no birth
From the earth to the earth,
But the Roses, wise and dear,
Live in heaven half the year.

THE DARK VALLEY

No honey for the busy artist throng,
No glittering texture dear unto the mind ;
No shining web of many-coloured song
Shalt thou here find.

In this dark valley shadows everywhere
Whisper and mock at life's so radiant will ;
Thus do I know the golden sun shines fair
Behind the hill.

I bring you but a little magic shade . . .
A dream found true when one awakeneth . .
A shadow that the sun's dear light has made
In the Valley of Death.

FREEDOM

WE who are mourners make no moan
For the Body lost in the grave,
For the Soul is a shining wave
And the Body is but a stone
Dragged out in the under tow
And tossed by the waves to and fro,
And worn and tormented and cast
Back again on the rocks at last.

Ah, the body lost in the grave
Is freed from the tyrant soul,
Delivered from wind and wave,
Current and quicksand and shoal,
Freed from the cruel sea
But the spirit is never free
There is no truce in that war
Of the tides that clash near the shore.

Quietly under the green roof
Does the worn-out body lie,
With a shadow of strange reproof
The soul wonders it could die—

Wonders that her slave is dead,
Has no need of daily bread,
Free as dust and free as air,
With nothing in the world to bear. . . .

IMMORTALITY

Is there nothing you care for or dream to
remember

When the earth crumbles off from your
sharp-edged will ?

Now through your life's last tormented
December

Howls the ravenous wind round the desolate
hill.

When you pass in great joy the storm-shaken
portal,

Shall the welcoming Angels in unison cry :
What flower have you brought of the spirit
immortal

From the tenebrous earth to the æther-lit
sky.

Lo ! this will I tell them, to their shining
bowers

I bring but a light from the House of the
Blind,

For earth hath great need of each one of her
 flowers,
 Whilst last Summer's last roses have failed
 from my mind.

Yea, the dreams and the deeds and the sorrows
 of night
 In the opal-cut splendour forgotten shall be,
Yet clear in my mind burns a ray of starlight,
 In my soul flows immortal a wave of the
 sea.

My life, with its burden of toil and derision,
 Is lost as the leaves of the sycamore shed.
Yet the verses' dark waters reflecting the
 Vision
 Roll on evermore through the soul of the
 dead.

THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END

HERE on dark waters falls the yellow leaf,
Here many broken days and stormy hours
intense,
And moments of deep passion buried gleam;
This is the Pool of Patience, Toil, and
Grief,
Ah Life, the river of song doth issue thence. . .
These things are but the waters of the
stream.

THE THRONE OF OSIRIS.

In the roof the swallow has built her nest,
And the martins under the eaves,
And all winged things have a chamber of rest
In the shadow of swaying leaves.

The rabbit has dug for himself a hole,
The green worm lies at the heart of the
rose,
And there is rest for the vagrant soul
Wherever the shallowest river flows.

THE STREET ORATOR

AT Clitheroe from the Market Square

I saw rose-lit the mountain's gleam,
I stood before the people there
And spake as in a dream.

At Oldham of the many mills

The weavers are of gentle mind ;
At Haslingden one flouted me,
At Burnley all the folk were kind,

At Ashton town the rain came down,

The east wind pierced us through and
through,
But over little Clitheroe
The sky was bright and blue.

At Clitheroe through the sunset hour

My soul was very far away :
I saw Ben Bulben's rose and fire
Shining afar o'er Sligo Bay.

At Clitheroe round the Market Square
The hills go up, the hills go down,
Just as they used to go about
A mountain-guarded Irish town.

Oh, I have friends in Haslingden,
And many a friend in Hyde,
But 'tis at little Clitheroe
That I would fain abide.

WOMEN'S TRADES ON THE EMBANKMENT

"Have Patience!"—The Prime Minister to the
Franchise Deputation, May 19th, 1906.

WHERE the Egyptian pillar—old, so old—
With mystery fronts the open English sky,
Bearing the yoke of those who heap up gold,
The sad-eyed workers pass in silence by.

Heavily hewing wood and drawing water,
These have been patient since the world
began—
Patient through centuries of toil and slaughter,
For Patience is the ultimate soul of man.

Patient with endless lords and overseers,
Since long-dead Israelites made bricks to
please
A King whose heart was hardened to their
tears,
What time they still besought him on their
knees.

Their patience was the King's confederate,
Their weakness helped his power unaware ;
In vain men pray unto the rich and great,
For only God-like spirits answer prayer.

Long has submission played a traitor's part—
Oh human soul, no patience any more
Shall break your wings and harden Pharaoh's
heart,
And keep you lingering on the Red Sea shore.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

ROBBED and wounded, all the day
The great cause by the roadside lay.
The Rich and Mighty in their Pride
Passed by on the other side.
With smiling lips indifferent
On their way the statesmen went.
At evening in the sunset flame
Out of the mill the winders came;
She who with four great looms weaves
Found Justice fallen amongst thieves,
Stone-breakers resting from their toil
Have poured out wine and oil.
The miner hurrying from the mine
Has seen a flash of light divine,
And every tired labourer
Has given a helping hand to her.
The workman leaning on his spade,
Or the tramp resting in the shade,
The navvy who the roadway mends,
These are our comrades, these our friends—
Beggars, never yet in vain
Have we stood in wind and rain

For hours at the Factory Gate ;
Never idly do we wait
In the dark and empty street,
Till the thronging shadows fleet
Gather round us, grief, despair,
Is no idle story there :
Patient faces from the loom,
Eyes dark with the whole world's gloom,
Haunted faces, sorrowful eyes,
Read the secret of the Wise,
Look the round world through and through,
Seeing naught but false or true,
Seeing in the whole world wide
But one side or the other side.
Want and hunger linger near
The Divine Fire burning clear.
The cold sleet and the bitter wind
Open the eyes of the blind.
Gracious deeds are dreamed and done
By those who seldom see the sun.
Lips grow pitiful, drawn, and pale
Where the darkness does not fail ;

But one dim street lamp braves the night. . .
Yet in these souls burns a great light.
Thus from the poor we beg our bread
And Justice rises from the dead

VAGRANTS

OH, Little Human Words and delicate,
You wander through the great world up
and down ;
Though rich men heed fine phrases of the
great,
Poor Words and wingless tramp from town
to town.

He who loves Wisdom for her rich attire
Will turn her ragged children from his door,
And yet an empty chair beside the fire
Kind hearts keep for these Vagrants
evermore.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

OTHERS there were who spake with fire
and art ;

I stammered, breaking down beneath the
weight

Of that great stone that lies upon my heart

When with one passion all my nerves
vibrate.

Little I said, who had so much to say—

This is the memory that sears and stings,

My soul was fire, my thoughts were clear
as day,

Yet had my soul no wings.

No matter, when that force beyond control

Sweeps on one side the cobwebs of the
brain,

In broken stammers speaks the inmost soul . .

Nor shall her passion smite the air in vain.

THE THRIFTLESS DREAMER.

PSYCHE, the Queen, says truly the old tale,
Into the heart of life's thick darkness fell,
And she dwelt lonely in an obscure vale,
Yet waited on by Powers Invisible.

Thus Ireland many blame and many praise,
And she the while radiant in meadows
green,
And following silently her ancient ways,
Is served by hosts of delicate hands unseen.

You whom the bitter hour maketh wise,
In vain you urge on her your prosperous
goal,
She has her visions in her own eyes,
She has her destinies in her own soul.

Down from her mountains still the old cart
crawls
As it crawled long ago laden with turf ;
There are still gaps, thank God, in all our
walls,
On lonely shores still breaks the Atlantic surf.

Ye who would measure all things by a rule
And cut the holy day in busy hours,
There is one land you cannot put to school,
And therefore shall she be one of the
world's powers.

On through your anxious voices fret and jar,
The soul pursues unmoved her silent course,
You shall not shake her trust in her own star,
Her unseen legions and embattled force.

For round her, driven from this dark world,
wait

Mysterious powers and unseen ministers,
And all the veiled Angels at the Gate
Guard with their swords this thriftless dream
of hers.

ON THE EMBANKMENT

THE Rich, the Great, the Wise are here, the
Living and the Dead,

Where the Great Towers of Westminster
hold the high heavens at bay,

And the poor souls who have no hope take
fame or power instead,

Whilst many an obscure wingéd one goes
smiling on her way.

This I know of the poor, 'tis when the Great
Hopes fail

That men have gained possession of material
things ;

But all the praise of all the crowds shall not
prevail

To make good to a human soul the loss of
her wild wings.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

Down by Glencar Waterfall
There's no winter left at all.

Every little flower that blows
Cold and darkness overthrows.

Every little thrush that sings
Quells the wild air with brave wings.

Every little stream that runs
Holds the light of brighter suns.

But where men in office sit
Winter holds the human wit.

In the dark and dreary town
Summer's green is trampled down.

Frozen, frozen everywhere
Are the springs of thought and prayer.

Rise with us and let us go
To where the living waters flow.

Oh, whatever men may say
Ours is the wide and open way

Oh, whatever men may dream
We have the blue air and the stream.

Men have got their towers and walls,
We have cliffs and waterfalls.

Oh, whatever men may do
Ours is the gold air and the blue.

Men have got their pomp and pride—
All the green world is on our side.

HAVE PITY

BECAUSE some seed, no man knows why,
Has not got the heart to grow,
I think the fountains have run dry,
The Living Water ceased to flow.

Because that such a little Tower
Is built with so much strain and toil,
I think there's but a feeble power
Hiding behind the broken soil.

Under the blue and beaming sky
I watched a white bud fading brown ;
The lost and folded mystery
Unborn unto the dust go down.

Unto the weak all weak things cried,
And pity in the human breast—
Ah, break not the hedge-sparrow's pride
Nor rob the blue eggs from her nest.

All the world's weak and shackled will
Would fain bring every seed to bear—
Spare thou the Primrose on the Hill,
The frail wind-shaken Tower spare.

COMRADES

MEN who are born to die whose dreams are
soiled by the dust

Are yet most dear to their friends, and
gentle lovers and kind ;

But only the gods in heaven are true enough
to be just.

Alas that Justice dwells not in any human
mind.

That star that fell from heaven, dethroned
and lost long ago,

Thou shalt not find it hidden in the wisdom
of the wise,

Thou shalt not see it glimmer in the deep
heart of a foe,

And hardly shall it shine on thee from any
comrade's eyes.

We who have followed the same star and
fought for the same dream,

Are bound together for ever by the wild
deed's bond and power.

**Behold we have cast our nets into the same
dark stream,**

**We have climbed the same sheer cliff to seek
the same blue flower.**

ON THE CLIFF

(At Dunraven.)

WHERE the waves in a moaning throng
From darkness to darkness glide,
And the everlasting song
Is chanted by wind and tide,

In the wood on the cliff's face
The gentle primroses flower,
And by the sun and the wind's grace
The daffodils have their hour.

All round me the tides moan—
And my soul, to battle hurled,
Is wounded and overthrown
In the wars of the dark world.

But ever at evening,
Through the great tide's ebb and flow,
And the waves' moan and the spray's sting,
Out of the world I go.

To the soul's secret place,
Where in the golden air,

By the sun and the wind's grace,
The primroses grow fair.

There to that flower-lit hill,
Whither all joy has fled,
By the sun and the wind's will,
Come the holy dead.

Broken beauty, quenched light,
Soul of truth, out-faced, denied,
Violets blue and snowdrops white
Grow on that lost hill-side.

THE FLAMING SWORD

Oh, softly falls the shining leaf,
There is no beauty without grief,
And all our loving is one long regret,
Seeing in the pageant of the sunset
But shadows of those pure mysterious skies
That hid the secret of the white sunrise.

Harsh streams of cold forgetfulness,
Far from the great tide's strain and stress
Silver at dawn, and when the day is done
Gliding through the fires of the red sun—
Shadows are these of that sharp flaming sword
That hides from us the garden of the Lord.

The Hidden Eden in our dreams
Beyond the shining barrier gleams,
Thither it is that all our loves do go,
There between the tide's ebb and the tide's
 flow
With silent footsteps doth the spirit glide,
Amongst her secret comrades to abide.

Alas, the great sword flaming red
Between the living and the dead ;
Those who yet sojourn from eve till morn
With the newly dead and the pale unborn,
At noon with dazzled eyes disconsolate
Stand weeping by the barred and dreadful gate.

For all our heavy sorrows sink
Deep down beneath the thoughts we think ;
Thus can no comfortable sayings cure
Grief for the separate, dead, obscure.
One flash of secret Light may the gods give
To all who in the wilderness must live.

Lord of the sunset's flash and shine,
Lord of the hard dividing line,
Between thy stars and our so barren heath,
Till thou has thrust thy sword back in its
sheath

Till we can wholly know, or quite forget,
Still all our love must be one long regret.

THE VISIONARY

"Constant use of will power extends the sphere of its action."—Eliphas Levi.

DEAR life has cast me forth from her gay
throng.

Unto her pipings I could never dance,
Nor learn the music of her simplest song—
I was a traitor to her brave romance.

A traitor to her flag of gold and blue
I sought for wisdom silently apart,
What was there left for such an one to do,
But trust the stranger voices in her heart?

He who would search the silence dwells alone.
From far-off towers in the inner air
Floats down the sudden cry of the Unknown,
The lonely Eastern Voice that calls to
prayer.

I dream a dream of comrades, but not here
Of fellowship, not now, that life denies
These songs that I in truth alone hold dear
When I am dead shall fall under strange
eyes.

And some brave spirit, smiling and serene,
Where I trod blindly choked with dust
shall say :
“She sought her whole life through the Light
Unseen ;
Stumbling and lost she still held on her
way ”

Ah, gentle comrade of the coming time,
For you there is no danger in that road ;
Casting aside the broken staffs of rhyme
You enter easily the gods' abode.

From that rash mountainous and sheer ascent
You gaze down on the weakness of the will,
The darkness of the feeble lost intent,
The blind soul groping on the perilous hill.

You shall not scorn dark seas or wind-swept
caves,
You Dweller on the Rainbow Towers of
Light,
While through your being thrills in stormy
waves
The call of the Abyss unto the Height

Few flowers but fair on the high mountains
grow,

Whilst to the Rich belongs the sunny day,
And Wise men walk where living waters flow,
The Poor are the best comrades either way.

You shall not scorn the feeble voice that
cries

In the world's wilderness . . . for his
reward

The rough-voiced pioneer whom men despise
Doth yet prepare the way for a new Lord.

With toil one groped along the path you tread,
Your gay robe shining in the sun and wind,
Yet shall the Living join hands with the Dead,
The Seer find a Comrade in the Blind.

So might one boast : "Lo, I have climbed
the crest

Of the high hill and stood on that sheer
peak

Whereon the golden eagle builds her nest"—
This is the giant labour of the weak.

**The Mighty Spirit of the secret place,
The little coward soul afraid to climb,
Shall meet upon the mountains face to face,
As Moses met with God in the old time.**

**In Light you pass unto your star-lit goal,
Yet my harsh purposes and baffled feet
And little foolish songs cry to your soul,
And surely in the end we two shall meet.**

THE PASSAGE OF THE STAR.

"Since thou knowest, pass on, O Osiris."—Book of the Dead.

[*Outside the door that leads into the Hall of Double Maati, the Palace of Justice and Truth, where "the soul is separated from every sin which he hath done and may behold the faces of the gods." Here wait the dead Kings of Upper and Lower Egypt amid a great throng of souls who must pass the ordeal of Knowledge before they can gain the true life of Osiris.*

VOICES IN THE PYRAMID

ROUND Heaven's Gate the gods have set no
guard,

Nor round the pathway of the Wing'd Sun
Unto the Just no door is ever barred,
Nor shrine of Amen Ra the Hidden One.

Ye who would put your shining dreams to
proof,

Ye who have lost your kinship with the
ground
Beneath the gleaming Lintel in the Roof,
Your way lies open to the Life Profound.

Lo, king and peasant, beg the Key of Life
From Sekhet. All men born would pass
the gate
That leads beyond rough ecstasies of strife
To the far meadows of the Discarnate.

Safe doth the key lie on the goddess' knees,
No stranger treadeth down the growing
wheat,
The cold hands of the Inner Mysteries
Guard all our meadows from barbarian feet.

The open secret of the Mystic Door
Deep in the passage of the star lies hid ;
Oh, Amen Ra be praised for evermore,
Thou lonely Dweller in the Pyramid.

*[A dead Pharaoh comes forward out
of the darkness, and tries to pass
the Hidden Lintel.]*

THE PHARAOH

Strange, whilst I lived I had both wine and oil
And the year's spoil of corn well harvested,
But now I have naught but wanderings and
much toil ;
All doors are shut to me now I am dead.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE THRESHOLD.
Speak thou my name.

THE EARTH SPIRITS
Lo, this is that dark hour
That leads each mighty soul to his reward.

THE DEAD PHARAOH
Behold, oh hidden gate, thy name is Power,
Thou art the Pathway of the Flaming
Sword.

VOICES OF DEAD KINGS IN THE PYRAMID
An answer from the clay that fears the fire . .
An answer from the dust that dreads the
wind
Oh thou lost music of a broken lyre,
Dear art thou to the exile's heavy mind . . .

*[The Dead Pharaoh is surrounded by
a throng of ghostly Kings. An old
woman, bearing a heavy jar of water
on her shoulders, comes slowly down
the passage, and stands before the
Hidden Lintel.]*

THE LEFT LINTEL OF THE DOOR
Speak thou my name.

SPIRITS OF THE WATER

I hold the light's lost rays
As the cold dewdrop holds the mirrored flame,
The stars shine on the Burden of many
days.

THE OLD WOMAN

The Lamp lit in the Window is thy name.

THE RIGHT LINTEL OF THE DOOR

My name, tell me my name.

SPIRITS OF THE AIR

This was the smile
Of Isis and the circle of her eyes,
And starlight on green waters of the Nile
Lighting the homeward journey of the Wise.

THE OLD WOMAN

Thou art the Light of Light in darkness spilt,
The strange divided glory of the sun,
The Rainbow's Arch of the seven colours
built,
The way of the Many unto the One.

*[The old woman draws nearer. Light
shines from the Hidden Lintel.]*

THE CHALLENGE OF THE THRESHOLD
Tell me my name, or else thou shalt not cross
This stone.

SPIRITS OF THE FIRE
The secret of the House of Flame
Is Justice and the swing of gain and loss.

A long silence.

THE OLD WOMAN
Behold, the Weight in the Right Place, that
is thy name.

[The Hidden Lintel opens to her. She passes over the threshold, and disappears into the Hall of Right and Truth. The Dead Pharaoh, surrounded by the spirits of his ancestors, moves away into the darkness, lamenting. From a very long way off the chant of the Israelites is heard. They have passed over the Red Sea in safety.]

CHORUS
Lift up your heads, oh ye gates, and be ye lift
up ye everlasting doors, and the King of
Glory shall come in. Who is the
King of Glory

She bade her goldsmiths cut and grave

For him an agate ring.

‘This too will pass’—the Queen’s reply

From her dark jewel shone.

Thus did she answer with a sigh

The wise King Solomon.

MAN AND WOMAN

WHEN Solomon of old
Shewed all his stuffs of silver sheen
And walls inlaid with gold
To Sheba's Queen,
Her very spirit sank in her
Such treasure of white ivory
And crystal bowls and scented fir
And marble did she see.
And loud she praised the great King's store
Of carven wood and flashing stone,
Where cedar was as sycamore
Before the lion-guarded throne.
And all his words were very wise,
And his great temple passing fair,
And humble were her soft replies
Treading his ivory stair.
But when she came to her own place
She smiled to think of him,
And all the glory and the grace
Of his wise words grew dim.
Behold she sent a slave
With gifts unto the King;

RETROSPECT

WHEN I was young the world looked old
And all the mountains hard and gray,
I shivered in the winter's cold ;
The very sunshine was not gay
When I was young.

When I was old the world seemed young ;
On primroses the spheréd dew
Shone with a sudden radiance flung
From miles of gold and miles of blue
When I was old.

I feared the world when I was young,
I loved the world when I was old ;
But now in vain her songs are sung,
Her strangest stories leave me cold
As tales twice told.

Now I am dead the vernal earth
Seems very small and very far,
And every soul in death or birth
Too great for such a narrow star,
Now I am dead.

For broken is the golden bowl,
And old and young are reconciled,
All things are frailer than the soul,
And life seems but a faery child
Now I am dead.

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